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JC530 U.S. PTO

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventorship.....Sierra et al.  
Applicant ..... Microsoft Corporation  
Attorney's Docket No. .... MS1-485US  
Title: Methods And Arrangements For Providing A Mark-Up Language Based Graphical User Interface For  
User Identification To An Operating System

TRANSMITTAL LETTER AND CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

To: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231  
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09/539231  
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The following enumerated items accompany this transmittal letter and are being submitted for the matter identified in the above caption.

- 1. Transmittal Letter with Certificate of Mailing included.
- 2. PTO Return Postcard Receipt
- 3. Check in the Amount of \$1,048.00
- 4. Fee Transmittal
- 5. New patent application (title page plus 19 pages, including claims 1-29 & Abstract)
- 6. Executed Declaration
- 7. 3sheets of formal drawings (Figs. 1-3)
- 8. Assignment w/Recordation Cover Sheet

Large Entity Status [x] Small Entity Status [ ]

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of fees or credit overpayments to Deposit Account No. 12-0769 in connection with any patent application filing fees under 37 CFR 1.16, and any processing fees under 37 CFR 1.17.

Date: 3-30-2000 By: Thomas A. Jolly  
Reg. No. 39,241

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

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Express Mail No. (if applicable) EL580803665

Date: 3/30/00 By: Lori A. Vierra

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

**Methods And Arrangements For Providing A Mark-Up  
Language Based Graphical User Interface For User  
Identification To An Operating System**

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&

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ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. MS1-485US

1 **RELATED APPLICATION**

2 This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Application Serial  
3 No. \_\_/\_\_\_\_\_, filed December 15, 1999 (Applicant's Docket Number  
4 149399.1, entitled "Web-Based User Interface For User Identification To The  
5 Operating System", express mailing label number EL425348720US), the  
6 disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.

7  
8 **TECHNICAL FIELD**

9 This invention relates to computers and software, and more particularly to  
10 methods and arrangements that provide a mark-up language based graphical user  
11 interface (GUI) that can be implemented to identify users to an operating system.

12  
13 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

14 Computer systems are often protected by a logon program and/or other  
15 subsequent authentication programs that determine whether a user has permission  
16 to access certain computer system resources. By way of example, a networked  
17 computer may require that a user input a valid user name and password before the  
18 user is allowed to access network resources. Similarly, a Web site on the World  
19 Wide Web (WWW) portion of the Internet or on an intranet may require a valid  
20 user ID and password before the user is allowed to gain further access to various  
21 resources.

22 Controlling user access is not limited to networked computers. A single  
23 computer that is accessed by several users may also need to limit access to files  
24 and/or various programs therein. Thus, for example, in a home environment, a  
25 parent may decide to limit a child's access to the computer entirely, certain

programs and/or certain data. Similarly, in a business environment, certain users may have limited access.

Controlling access to computers as described above is well known. Typically, there is an initial logon program or the like that requests user input, receives the user input and determines if the user is allowed access. Once the user has been authenticated, then other programs are allowed to operate. For example, in a networked operating system environment, during the booting-up of a personal computer (PC) or like device connected to the network, the user is typically presented with a modal dialog requesting a user name and associated password. In this example, the modal dialog is displayed by the network's logon program. For a single PC, a logon program associated with the operating system may display a similar modal dialog.

In either case, the modal dialog tends to be tightly integrated within the logon program code of the network software and/or operating system software. As a result, it is often difficult and expensive to significantly alter the modal dialog or otherwise to introduce new functional and nonfunctional features, such as those typically associated with conventional graphical user interfaces (GUIs).

Thus, there is need for improved methods and arrangements that provide enriched techniques for identifying users to an operating system. Preferably, the methods and arrangements will allow for a more advanced GUI to be presented to the user, while also remaining easy for the developer to maintain and modify.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention includes various methods and arrangements that can be implemented to identify users to an operating system through an advanced graphical user interface (GUI). The resulting GUI can be visually compelling and functional while advantageously remaining easy for the developer to create, maintain and modify.

Thus, for example, the above stated needs and others are met by a method that includes arranging for a markup language rendering engine to be loaded substantially near the beginning of an operating system initialization procedure, and providing markup language code suitable for use with the markup language rendering engine. The markup language is capable of soliciting at least one user input associated with a user logon process when rendered by the markup language rendering engine.

With the above example in mind, in accordance with certain implementations, a logon screen, for example, can be rendered from code written in Dynamic HTML (Hypertext Markup Language), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML), Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML), or the like.

For the logon screen to be most effective upon initializing the computer, there will usually be a need to render the associated markup language file(s) early during the initialization stage. Accordingly, in certain implementations, the markup language rendering engine is loaded very near the beginning of the initialization of the operating system.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

A more complete understanding of the various methods and arrangements of the present invention may be had by reference to the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a block diagram depicting an exemplary computer system.

Fig. 2 depicts an exemplary mark-up language based graphical user interface suitable for use in the computer system of Fig. 1 in identifying users to the operating system.

Fig. 3 is a flowchart depicting an exemplary process for identifying users to the operating system using a mark-up language based graphical user interface.

## **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

As shown in Fig. 1, computer 20 includes one or more processors or processing units 21, a system memory 22, and a bus 23 that couples various system components including the system memory 22 to processors 21. Bus 23 represents one or more of any of several types of bus structures, including a memory bus or memory controller, a peripheral bus, an accelerated graphics port, and a processor or local bus using any of a variety of bus architectures.

The system memory includes read only memory (ROM) 24 and random access memory (RAM) 25. A basic input/output system (BIOS) 26, containing the basic routines that help to transfer information between elements within computer 20, such as during start-up, is stored in ROM 24.

Computer 20 further includes a hard disk drive 27 for reading from and writing to a hard disk, not shown, a magnetic disk drive 28 for reading from and writing to a removable magnetic disk 29, and an optical disk drive 30 for reading

The drives and their associated computer-readable media provide nonvolatile storage of computer readable instructions, data structures, program modules and other data for computer 20. Although the exemplary environment described herein employs a hard disk, a removable magnetic disk 29 and a removable optical disk 31, it should be appreciated by those skilled in the art that other types of computer readable media which can store data that is accessible by a computer, such as magnetic cassettes, flash memory cards, digital video disks, random access memories (RAMs) read only memories (ROM), and the like, may also be used in the exemplary operating environment.

A number of program modules may be stored on the hard disk, magnetic disk 29, optical disk 31, ROM 24, or RAM 25, including an operating system 35, one or more application programs 36, other program modules 37, and program data 38. A user may enter commands and information into computer 20 through input devices such as keyboard 40 and pointing device 42. Other input devices (not shown) may include a microphone, joystick, game pad, satellite dish, scanner, or the like. These and other input devices are connected to the processing unit 21 through an interface 46 that is coupled to bus 23.

A monitor 47 or other type of display device is also connected to bus 23 via an interface, such as a video adapter 48. In addition to the monitor, personal computers typically include other peripheral output devices (not shown) such as speakers and printers.





Logon screen 100 can also be configured to display other user related information 116 to a user. In this example, user related information 116 identifies that Suzie has ten (10) new messages.

A second title area 106 is shown in this example along the left hand border of logon screen 100. Here, second title area 106 identifies the computer as the “Den Computer”. A selectable shut down mechanism 108 is also provided to allow a user to shut down the computer.

With the above example in mind, in accordance with certain implementations, logon screen 100 is a mark-up language based GUI. For example, a Dynamic HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) can be used to create logon screen 100. Dynamic HTML provides a mechanism to include a wide variety of functional as well as non-functional features to logon screen 100. Other types of mark-up languages and the like may also be used to define logon screen 100. For example, eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible Hypertext

For logon screen 100 to be effective upon initializing computer 20, there is a need to render the associated markup language file(s) early during the initialization stage. Accordingly, a markup language rendering engine (i.e., program) is loaded very near the beginning of the initialization of the operating system. Such rendering engines are well known. An exemplary markup language rendering engine is provided within Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE).

Dynamic HTML allows developers to create very attractive and colorful user interfaces. Thus, logon screen 100 may incorporate graphics and animations easily, while scripting complex behaviors, such as defining what happens when a user clicks on their name. The logon screen can be multi-layered and scaled to work with different resolutions. Additionally, complex graphical visual effects, such as, e.g., alpha blending, can be employed to create fades and transparencies that would be very difficult to implement in a traditional modal dialog interface.

By using a markup language and preloading the markup language rendering engine in the logon context, developers can advantageously prototype and generate dynamic user interfaces quickly and at a lower cost than would be required to significantly modify a conventional modal dialog. Thus, conceivably, each computer may have its own custom logon screen.

Having the ability to rapidly create and prototype logon screen designs will also make it easy for users to agree on what they like. For example, by changing the Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) and Dynamic HTML templates, developers can quickly change the logon screen without affecting the logon program code

1       Reference is now made to Fig. 3, which is a flowchart depicting an  
2       exemplary process 200 for identifying users to the operating system using a mark-  
3       up language based GUI.

4       In step 202, the logon program is initiated. This would occur upon  
5       rebooting computer 20, for example. Next, in step 204, a separate process, having  
6       a markup language rendering engine, is spawned to host the markup language  
7       content.

8       In step 206, the separate process retrieves user data from the operating  
9       system or elsewhere. The user data can include a listing of users, associated text  
10      identifiers 110, graphical identifiers 112, a password enabled identifier, and  
11      possibly, a password hint data (if enabled). Next, in step 208, the markup  
12      language rendering engine displays logon screen 100 along with applicable  
13      portions of the user data.

14      In step 210 the markup language rendering engine collects user inputs.  
15      This can include user mouse clicks, user typed text, audio commands, and/or other  
16      acceptable forms of user input. In the example of Fig. 2, William would select text  
17      identifier 110 or graphical identifier 112. Assuming that William has established a  
18      password (i.e., password is enabled), then he would need to enter his password.

19      Next, in step 212, the user inputs (e.g., user name and password) are  
20      provided to the logon program. In step 214, the logon program attempts to  
21      authenticate the user. If the user is authenticated, then a user desktop and/or  
22      workspace is created and subsequently displayed on display 47. If the user is not  
23      authenticated in step 214, then process 200 would return to either step 208, step  
24      210, or otherwise handle the failed attempted logon.

Although some preferred embodiments of the various methods and arrangements of the present invention have been illustrated in the accompanying Drawings and described in the foregoing Detailed Description, it will be understood that the invention is not limited to the exemplary embodiments disclosed, but is capable of numerous rearrangements, modifications and substitutions without departing from the spirit of the invention as set forth and defined by the following claims.

1 **CLAIMS**

2 What is claimed is:

3  
4 1. A method comprising:  
5 arranging for a markup language rendering engine to be loaded  
6 substantially near the beginning of an operating system initialization procedure;  
7 and

8 providing markup language code suitable for use with the markup language  
9 rendering engine, the markup language being capable of soliciting at least one user  
10 input when rendered by the markup language rendering engine, the user input  
11 being associated with a user logon process.

12  
13 2. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein providing the markup  
14 language code further includes providing user data, the user data being operatively  
15 associated with the user logon process.

16  
17 3. The method as recited in Claim 2, wherein the user data includes  
18 data selected from a set comprising a list of users, a text identifier, a graphical  
19 identifier, a password enabled identifier, and password hint data, and related user  
20 information data.

21  
22 4. The method as recited in Claim 2, further comprising:  
23 configuring the markup language rendering engine to display at least a  
24 portion of the user data based on the markup language code.  
25

5. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising:  
configuring the markup language code to provide the user input to an  
authorization entity for validation determination.

6. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the user input includes at  
least one input selected from a group of inputs comprising a user name, a user  
identifier, and a password.

7. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the markup language  
code includes markup language code selected from at least one markup language  
in a group comprising hypertext markup language (HTML), Dynamic Hypertext  
Markup Language (DHTML), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible  
Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML), and Standard Generalized Markup  
Language (SGML).

8. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable  
instructions for performing steps comprising:

arranging for a markup language rendering engine to be loaded  
substantially near the beginning of an operating system initialization procedure;  
and

providing markup language code suitable for use with the markup language  
rendering engine, the markup language being capable of soliciting at least one user  
input when rendered by the markup language rendering engine, the user input  
being associated with a user logon process.

1           9.     The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 8, wherein  
2 providing the markup language code further includes providing user data, the user  
3 data being operatively associated with the user logon process.

4  
5           10.    The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 9, wherein the  
6 user data includes data selected from a set comprising a list of users, a text  
7 identifier, a graphical identifier, a password enabled identifier, and password hint  
8 data, and related user information data.

9  
10          11.    The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 9, having further  
11 computer-executable instructions for performing the step of configuring the  
12 markup language rendering engine to display at least a portion of the user data  
13 based on the markup language code.

14  
15          12.    The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 8, having further  
16 computer-executable instructions for performing the step of configuring the  
17 markup language code to provide the user input to an authorization entity for  
18 validation determination.

19  
20          13.    The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 8, wherein the  
21 user input includes at least one input selected from a group of inputs comprising a  
22 user name, a user identifier, and a password.

23  
24          14.    The computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 8, wherein the  
25 markup language code includes markup language code selected from at least one

markup language in a group comprising hypertext markup language (HTML), Dynamic Hypertext Markup Language (DHTML), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML), and Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML).

15. An arrangement including a memory, a data storage device, a display device, and a processor operatively coupled to the memory, data storage device and the display device, the arrangement comprising:

a markup language rendering engine stored within the data storage device and suitable for loading in the memory substantially near the beginning of an operating system initialization procedure; and

markup language code suitable stored in the data storage device and configurable for use with the markup language rendering engine, the markup language being capable of soliciting at least one user input when rendered by the markup language rendering engine onto the display device, the user input being associated with a user logon process.

16. The arrangement as recited in Claim 15, further comprising user data stored in the data storage device and configurable for use with the markup language rendering engine, the user data being operatively associated with the user logon process.

17. The arrangement as recited in Claim 16, wherein the user data includes data selected from a set comprising a list of users, a text identifier, a



graphical identifier, a password enabled identifier, and password hint data, and related user information data.

18. The arrangement as recited in Claim 16, wherein the markup language rendering engine is further configurable to display at least a portion of the user data on the display device based on the markup language code.

19. The arrangement as recited in Claim 15, further comprising an authorization entity stored within the data storage device, and wherein the markup language rendering engine is further configurable to provide the user input to the authorization entity for validation determination based on the markup language code.

20. The arrangement as recited in Claim 15, wherein the user input includes at least one input selected from a group of inputs comprising a user name, a user identifier, and a password.

21. The arrangement as recited in Claim 15, wherein the markup language code includes markup language code selected from at least one markup language in a group comprising hypertext markup language (HTML), Dynamic Hypertext Markup Language (DHTML), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML), and Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML).

1           22. A method for use in logging users onto an operating system, the  
2 method comprising:

3                 loading a markup rendering engine substantially near the beginning  
4 of an operating system initialization procedure;

5                 retrieving user data from the operating system;

6                 rendering markup language code associated with a logon screen  
7 using at least a portion of the user data;

8                 collecting at least one user input associated with the logon screen;

9 and

10                establishing a logon session if the user input is valid.

11  
12           23. A method as recited in Claim 22 wherein establishing a logon  
13 session further includes:

14                 providing the user input to the operating system; and

15                 causing the operating system to authenticate the user input.

16  
17           24. The method as recited in Claim 23, wherein establishing a logon  
18 session further includes providing the user input to an authorization entity for  
19 validation determination.

20  
21           25. The method as recited in Claim 22, wherein the user data includes  
22 data selected from a set comprising a list of users, a text identifier, a graphical  
23 identifier, a password enabled identifier, and password hint data, and related user  
24 information data.

26. The method as recited in Claim 22, wherein the markup language code includes markup language code selected from at least one markup language in a group comprising hypertext markup language (HTML), Dynamic Hypertext Markup Language (DHTML), eXtensible Markup Language (XML), eXtensible Hypertext Markup Language (XHTML), and Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML).

27. A markup language based logon user interface arrangement for use in logging users onto an operating system of a computer, the user interface comprising:

a logon screen;

a user logon area within the logon screen, the user logon area visually identifying a plurality of users using text identifiers and graphical identifiers, such that each text identifier and graphical identifier are selectable by the user through the user interface and upon selection by the user cause the user interface to prompt the user to input a password; and

a single selectable shut down mechanism graphically located within the logon screen and configured to shut the computer down when selected through the user interface by the user.

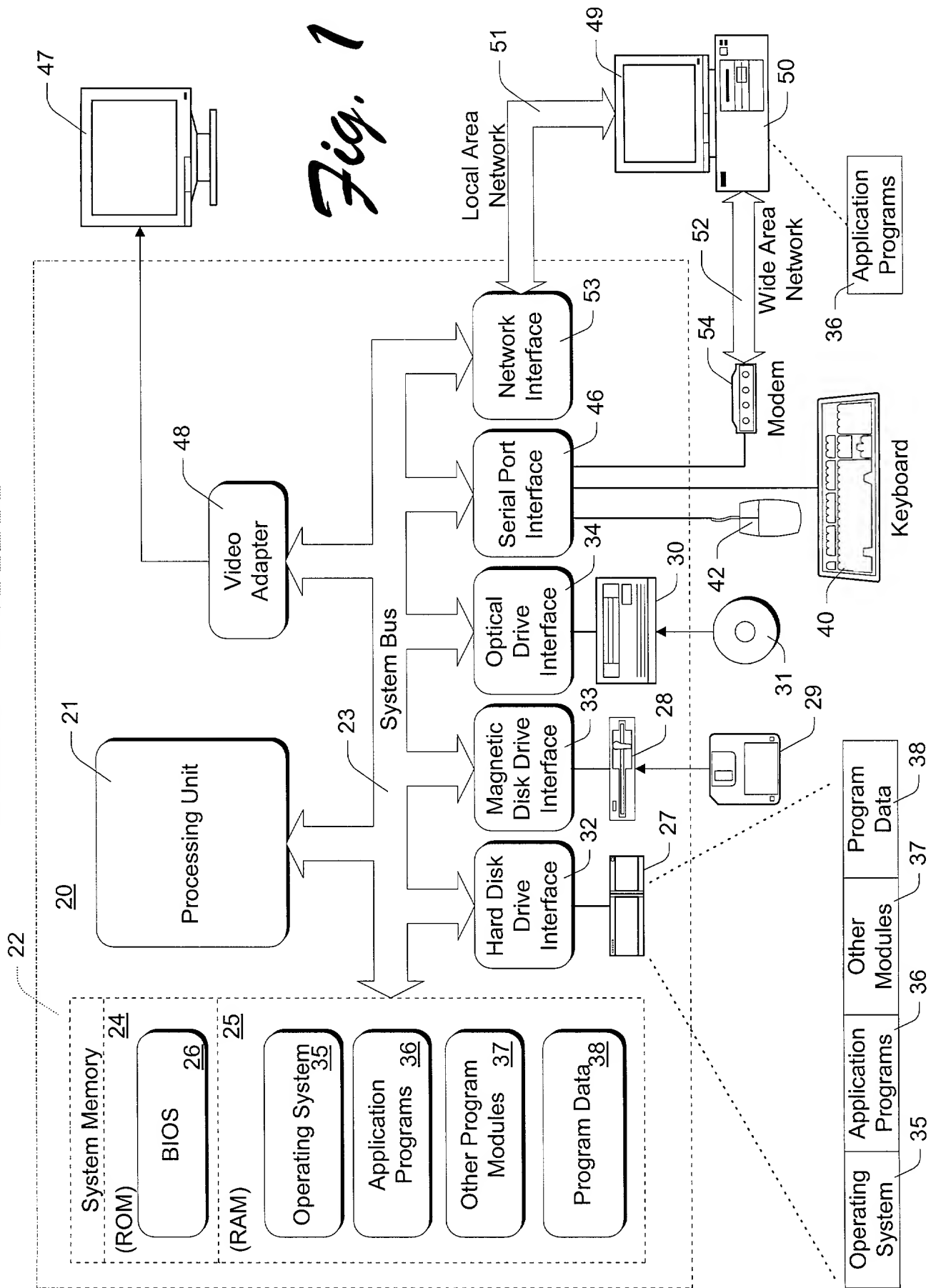
28. The user interface as recited in Claim 27, wherein the logon screen is rendered substantially near the beginning of the initialization of the operating system using a markup language rendering engine.



	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100	2101	2102	2103	2104	2105	2106	2107	2108	2109	2110	2111	2112	2113	2114	2115	2116	2117	2118	2119	2120	2121	2122	2123	2124	2125	2126	2127	2128	2129	2130	2131	2132	2133	2134	2135	2136	2137	2138	2139	2140	2141	2142	2143	2144	2145	2146	2147	2148	2149	2150	2151	2152	2153	2154	2155	2156	2157	2158	2159	2160	2161	2162	2163	2164	2165	2166	2167	2168	2169	2170	2171	2172	2173	2174	2175	2176	2177	2178	2179	2180	2181	2182	2183	2184	2185	2186	2187	2188	2189	2190	2191	2192	2193	2194	2195	2196	2197	2198	2199	2200	2201	2202	2203	2204	2205	2206	2207	2208	2209	2210	2211	2212	2213	2214	2215	2216	2217	2218	2219	2220	2221	2222	2223	2224	2225	2226	2227	2228	2229	2230	2231	2232	2233	2234	2235	2236	2237	2238	2239	2240	2241	2242	2243	2244	2245	2246	2247	2248	2249	2250	2251	2252	2253	2254	2255	2256	2257	2258	2259	2260	2261	2262	2263	2264	2265	2266	2267	2268	2269	2270	2271	2272	2273	2274	2275	2276	2277	2278	2279	2280	2281	2282	2283	2284	2285	2286	2287	2288	2289	2290	2291	2292	2293	2294	2295	2296	2297	2298	2299	2300	2301	2302	2303	2304	2305	2306	2307	2308	2309	2310	2311	2312	2313	2314	2315	2316	2317	2318	2319	2320	2321	2322	2323	2324	2325	2326	2327	2328	2329	2330	2331	2332	2333	2334	2335	2336	2337	2338	2339	2340	2341	2342	2343	2344	2345	2346	2347	2348	2349	2350	2351	2352	2353	2354	2355	2356	2357	2358	2359	2360	2361	2362	2363	2364	2365	2366	2367	2368	2369	2370	2371	2372	2373	2374	2375	2376	2377	2378	2379	2380	2381	2382	2383	2384	2385	2386	2387	2388	2389	2390	2391	2392	2393	2394	2395	2396	2397	2398	2399	2400	2401	2402	2403	2404	2405	2406	2407	2408	2409	2410	2411	2412	2413	2414	2415	2416	2417	2418	2419	2420	2421	2422	2
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Fig. 1



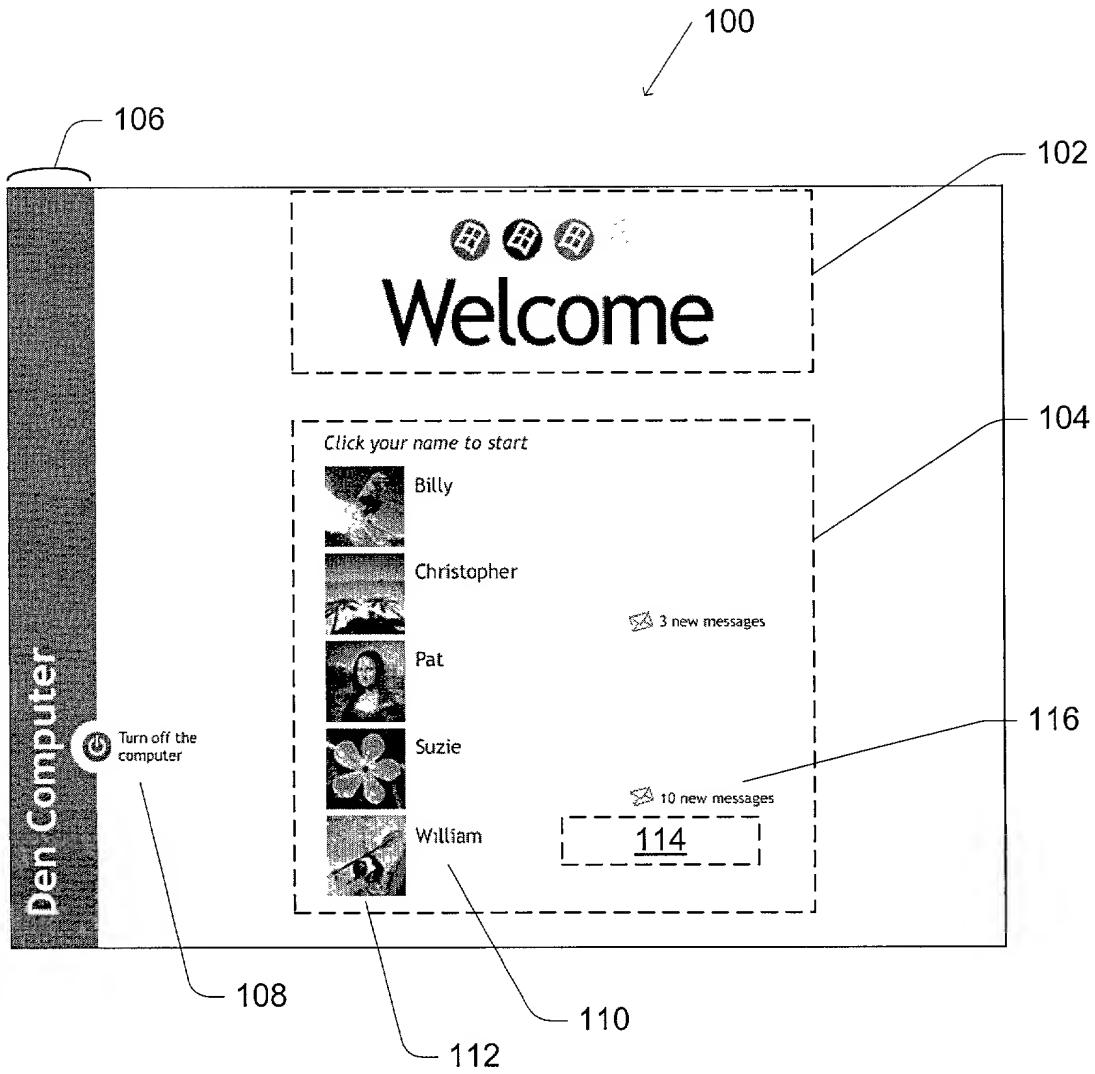
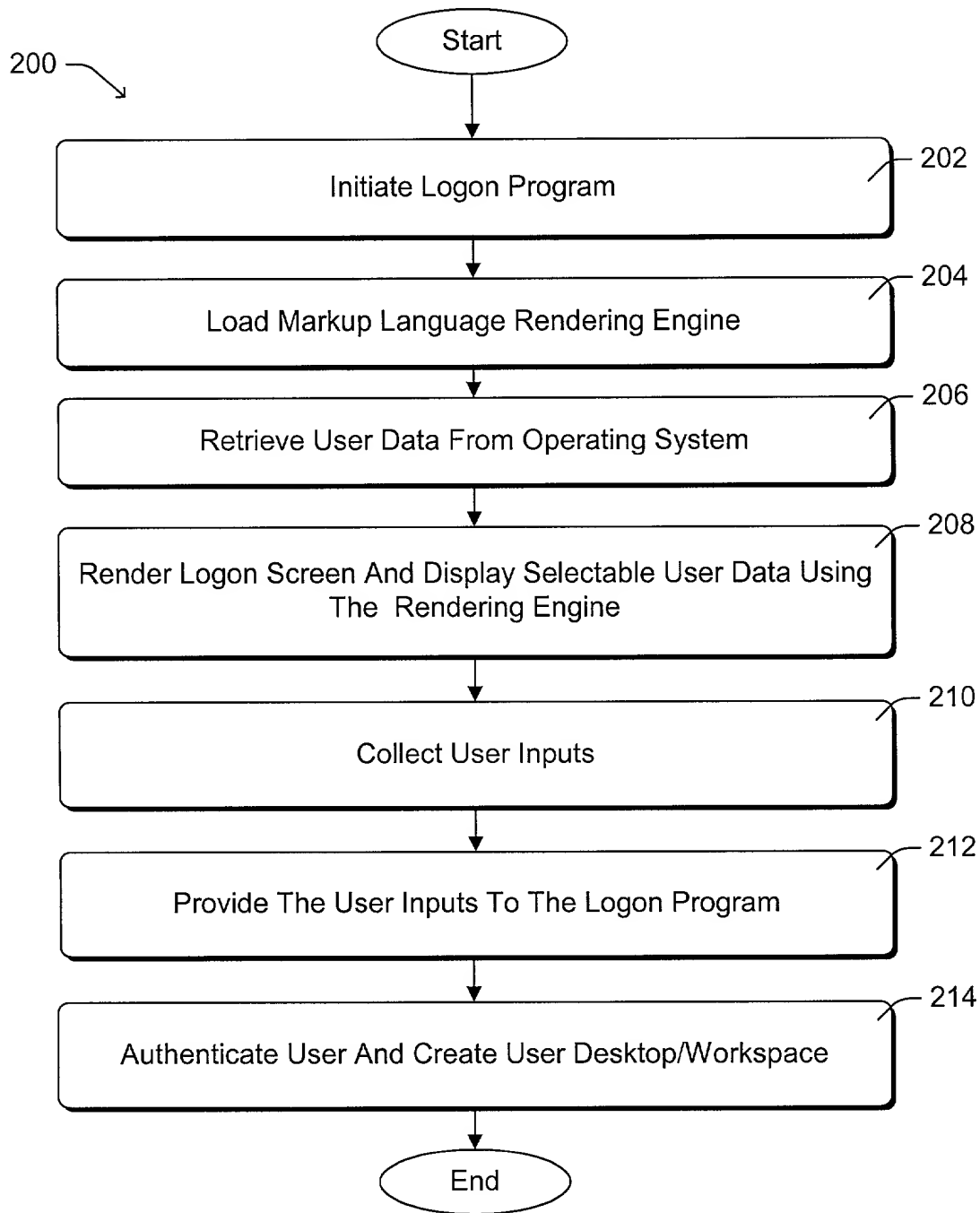


Fig. 2



*Fig. 3*



1 **IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

2 Inventorship.....Sierra et al.  
 3 Applicant ..... Microsoft Corporation  
 4 Attorney's Docket No. .... MS1-485US  
 Title: Methods And Arrangements For Providing A Mark-Up Language Based  
 Graphical User Interface For User Identification To An Operating System

5 **DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION**

6 As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

7 My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to  
 8 my name.

9 I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed  
 10 below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the  
 11 subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention  
 12 entitled "Methods And Arrangements For Providing A Mark-Up Language Based  
 13 Graphical User Interface For User Identification To An Operating System," the  
 14 specification of which is attached hereto.

15 I have reviewed and understand the content of the above-identified  
 16 specification, including the claims.

17 I hereby claim benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) of United States Provisional  
 18 Application \_\_/\_\_\_\_\_, filed December 15, 1999 (Applicant's Docket Number  
 19 149399.1, entitled "Web-Based User Interface For User Identification To The  
 20 Operating System").

21 I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the  
 22 examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal  
 23 Regulations, § 1.56(a).  
 24  
 25

1 PRIOR FOREIGN APPLICATIONS: no applications for foreign patents or  
2 inventor's certificates have been filed prior to the date of execution of this  
3 declaration.

4 **Power of Attorney**

5 I appoint the following attorneys to prosecute this application and transact all  
6 future business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected with this application:  
7 Lewis C. Lee, Reg. No. 34,656; Daniel L. Hayes, Reg. No. 34,618; Allan T.  
8 Sponseller, Reg. 38,318; Steven R. Sponseller, Reg. No. 39,384; James R.  
9 Banowsky, Reg. No. 37,773; Lance R. Sadler, Reg. No. 38,605; Michael A. Proksch,  
10 Reg. No. 43,021; Thomas A. Jolly, Reg. No. 39,241; David A. Morasch, Reg. No.  
11 42,905; Kasey C. Christie, Reg. No. 40,559; Katie E. Sako, Reg. No. 32,628 and  
12 Daniel D. Crouse, Reg. No. 32,022.

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14 Suite 500, Spokane, Washington, 99201. Direct telephone calls to: Thomas A. Jolly  
15 (509) 324-9256.

16  
17 All statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all  
18 statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that  
19 these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the  
20 like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of  
21 Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statement may  
22 jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued therefrom.  
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